

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT MEXICO 0542 ACTION SECSTATE INFO LA PAZ DEA HQ
15 JAN

QUOTE

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LA PAZ FOR AMB. VANCE; ARA FOR DEP. ASST. SEC. LUERS;
S/NM FOR ERNST; DEA FOR EOI-CUSACK

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, MX
SUBJECT: MEXICAN PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL ON NARCOTICS COMMISSIONS

REF: (A) MEXICO 365, (B) MEXICO 233, (C) MEXICO 11321

1. SUMMARY: IN REF (A), WE PROMISED LATER MESSAGE
CONTAINING OUR COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION.
MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL CONFIRMED ON JANUARY 13 THAT
THE LETTERS FROM MEXICAN PRESIDENT TO PRESIDENT FORD
AND PRESIDENTS OF BOTH HOUSES OF U.S. CONGRESS WERE
BEING PREPARED AND WOULD BE FORWARDED WITHIN NEXT
DAY OR TWO. DESPITE OBVIOUS RISKS THAT THE NEW
ORGANIZATIONS MIGHT BECOME SUBSTITUTES FOR ACTION,
WE BELIEVE PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S INITIATIVE IS
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MOST PROMISING. THE PRESIDENTIAL MEETING APPARENTLY

ALREADY HAS BROUGHT THE ARMY ON BOARD FOR THE INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN. OUR INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS ARE GIVEN BELOW (PARA 4) END SUMMARY.

2. IN AMBASSADOR'S JANUARY 13 TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL, LATTER CONFIRMED THAT THE LETTERS FROM PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA TO PRESIDENT FORD AND (WE THINK) TO PRESIDENTS OF BOTH HOUSES OF U.S. CONGRESS (SEE REF (B)) WERE ALREADY PREPARED AND WERE NOW BEING CLEARED BY SECRETARIAT OF FOREIGN RELATIONS. OJEDA SOMEWHAT REGRETTED THIS DELAY BUT NOTED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THESE COMMUNICATIONS BE CAREFULLY DONE AND REFLECTIVE OF BEST GOM THINKING ON THE NARCOTICS SUBJECT. HE SAID THE LETTERS WOULD BE SENT TO AMBASSADOR IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO FOR TRANSMITTAL. (COMMENT: THE PRESIDENT'S IDEA IS, WE BELIEVE, A MOST FORTUITOUS ONE, IN THAT IT IS AN ENTIRELY MEXICAN INITIATIVE WHICH, AS A MEXICAN PRESIDENTIAL LETTER GOING NORTH FIRST, IS FAR MORE CONVINCING THAN A MERE REACTION TO A U.S. PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION. THE ECHEVERRIA PROPOSAL COMES AS THE CULIMATION OF THE APPROACHES MADE OVER TIME BY AMBASSADORS VANCE AND JOVA; BY CONGRESSMAN RANGEL; ATTORNEY GENERAL LEVI DURING HIS DECEMBER 29 CONVERSATION WITH OJEDA WHEN HE CARRIED THE MESSAGE OF PRESIDENT FORD'S CONCERN; AND FINALLY BY THE EXCELLENTLY TIMED VISIT OF CONGRESSMEN WOLFF AND GILMAN. WHILE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TWIN COMMISSIONS DOES RUN THE RISK OF BEING NOTHING MORE THAN AS ONE CYNIC PUT IT, A PRETTILY WRAPPED GIFT BOX, WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE SPIRIT BEHIND THE GIFT AND BY THE IDENTITY OF THE DONOR. THE MEXICAN PRESIDENT'S SINCERITY AND CONCERN WERE CONVINCING AND WE SEE HIS INITIATIVE AS PROVIDING THE VERY FRUITFUL ELEMENT OF HIGHLY VISIBLE PRESIDENTIAL COMMITMENT TO THE NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM.

3. IN AN ASIDE CONCERNING THE PROGRESS OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NARCOTICS ERADICATION CAMPAIGN, OJEDA NOTED TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT AS AN OUTCOME OF THE JANUARY 10 MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT (REF A), THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF HAD SENT A DIRECTIVE TO ALL ARMY COMMANDS INSTRUCTING THEM TO PLACE A HIGH PRIORITY ON THE NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN AND TO PROVIDE FULL COOPERATION TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND HIS PERSONNEL. OJEDA REMARKED THAT CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR

GERTZ ON JANUARY 12 VISITED THE THREE ARMY ZONE COMMANDERS IN SINALOA, DURANGO, AND CHIHUAHUA. THEY WERE ENTHUSIASTIC AND COOPERATIVE, HE SAID. (COMMENT: APPARENTLY THE ARMY IS NOW IN THE INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN AS A RESULT OF THE 10 JANUARY MEETING TO WHICH THE SECDEF SENT HIS STAFF CHIEF. DATT QUESTIONS WHY THE SECDEF HIMSELF CHOSE NOT TO ATTEND, SINCE IT IS LIKELY THAT HE WAS PERSONALLY INVITED. AT ANY RATE, THE SECDEF NOW HAS THE AWAITED REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT CAME DIRECTLY FROM THE PRESIDENT. PRIOR TO THAT, WE HAD REPORTED (REF.C) THAT THE SECDEF'S STAFF CHIEF WAS WAITING FOR THE AG TO MAKE HIS PITCH FOR HELP IN THE "INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN," QUITE APART FROM THE ARMY'S OWN ON-GOING CAMPAIGN. END COMMENT.)

4. RECOMMENDATIONS: FINAL DECISIONS ON THE EXACT FORM TO BE GIVEN THESE NEW MECHANISMS MUST AWAIT RECEIPT OF PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S LETTER. IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER, WE KNOW WASHINGTON WILL BE GIVING URGENT CONSIDERATION TO THE MOST PRACTICAL AND PRODUCTIVE OF POSSIBLE ORGANIZATIONAL SCHEMES. WE WOULD FORESEE A VERSION OF THE EXISTING CCINC, ESPECIALLY CONSTITUTED TO CONSIDER THE MEXICAN PROBLEM ONLY, AND EXPANDED (BY THE INCLUSION OF EDUCATORS, MEDIA REPS, ETC.) TO REFLECT THE COMPOSITION OF THE MEXICAN NATIONAL COMMISSION. EACH NATIONAL BODY SHOULD HAVE A SMALL STEERING, OR EXECUTIVE, COMMITTEE WHICH WOULD MEET WITH ITS COUNTERPART AT REGULAR AND FREQUENT INTERVALS. WHEN MEETING TOGETHER, THE TWO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES COULD CONSTITUTE A JOINT WORKING GROUP

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TO MAKE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TWO NATIONAL COMMISSIONS. THE TWO NATIONAL COMMISSIONS MIGHT ALSO MEET JOINTLY AS A PLENARY BODY LESS FREQUENTLY, PERHAPS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS. WE ARE NOT AT THIS TIME PREPARED TO SUGGEST THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE U.S. COMMISSION; BUT WE WOULD EXPECT THAT THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO MEXICO WOULD, OF COURSE, BE INCLUDED. WE WOULD HOPE THAT MEXICAN AMBASSADOR OLLOQUI WOULD BE A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MEXICAN COMMISSION OR COULD OTHERWISE BE DRAWN INTO ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THIS EFFORT. EVENTUALLY, MEMBERS OF BOTH COMMISSIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN A PARTICULAR FIELD (E.G. REHABILITATION, PUBLIC EDUCATION) MIGHT FORM BILATERAL WORKING GROUPS AND MEET FOR

SPECIALIZED DISCUSSIONG IN THEIR RESPECTIVE FIELDS,
OR PERHAPS EVEN UNDERTAKE JOINT PROGRAMS IN THOSE
FIELDS.

5. WASHINGTON AGENCIES MAY ALSO WISH TO CONSIDER
OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC ENDORSEMENT OF JOINT
NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORTS OFFERED BY EXCHANGE OF
PRESIDENTIAL LETTERS. CONGRESSMEN WOLFF AND GILMAN
OF COURSE WISH TO MAKE PRESENTATION OF ECHEVERRIA'S
LETTER TO PRESIDENT FORD. RECOGNIZE THAT PERHAPS
THE SECRETARY HIMSELF MIGHT WISH TO DELIVER THE
LETTER, IN WHICH CASE THE CONGRESSMEN COULD EFFECT
DELIVERY OF THE LETTERS WE THINK ARE UNDER PRE-
PARATION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE. IN ANY CASE, DELIVERY OF
ECHEVERRIA LETTER PROVIDES OCCASION FOR APPRO-
PRIATE PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF RECOGNITION OF
ECHEVERRIA'S INITAITATIVE WHICH COULD FURTHER
ENGAGE HIM AND GOM IN THIS EFFORT. ALTERNATIVELY
PUBLICITY COULD AWAIT POST-DELIVERY RELEASE OF
PRESIDENT FORD'S REPLY.

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